

THE
Double Marriage :
OR, THE
FATAL RELEASE.
A TRUE
Secret HISTORY.

*Inconstancy's the Plague which first or last
Taints the whole Sex, the catching Court-Disease.*

L E E.

L O N D O N :

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T H E

FATAL RELEASE.

HOW little answerable to the *Beginning* is the *End* of some People! — And how vainly do we build our Hopes of a *future* Happiness on the enjoyment of a *present* one! — He that *to-day* seems *blest* beyond the reach of *Envy*, will, perhaps, *to-morrow* be *wretched*, past the relief of *Pity*. — The dark Decrees of *Fate* are only in the *Execution* to be reveal'd. — There are Events which cannot be foreseen by *Human* Penetration. — *Wisdom* but vainly aims to find a *Clue*, and *Thought* is lost in the mysterious *Maze*. *Bellcour* and *Alathia* set out with so fair a prospect of Prosperity in Life's uncertain Journey,

B that

that few there were who for every thing cou'd boast the like Advantage : The one was the elder Son of a Gentleman ; no less eminent for his great Possessions than for the antient and worthy Family from which he was descended. The other was the only Daughter of a Person, who for Services he had made acceptable to his Country, had been rais'd above the Gentry, and had something the advantage of the Father of *Bellcour* in *Grandeur*, as he had the contrary in point of *Wealth*. Never were two young Persons more perfect in all the Accomplishments peculiar to the different Sexes they were of. *Bellcour* had as much Learning as was necessary to a Gentleman who depended not on that alone to raise his Fortune : He had also admirable Skill in Fencing, and became a Horse as well as any Man in the World. Musick was a Science in which he took great delight, and was so great a Master of it, that he compos'd many excellent Tunes, which were justly admir'd by the best Proficients in the Art : Nor was he inferior in Dancing to any Nobleman at Court. To all this, he had an Air and Mien which gave irresistible Graces to every Thing he said and did : In fine, 'tis impossible to describe him such as he really was ; never was Man more form'd to charm.—*Alathia*, on the other hand, had
Beauty,

Beauty, such as, in Idea, enliven'd the Fancies of the celebrated *Titian* and *Raphael*, famous for their Representations of the Queen of Love; a Wit no less sparkling than her Eyes, and a Humour the most gay and entertaining that cou'd be, mix'd with a Softness all-inchanting: so engaging was her whole Behaviour, that she seem'd ordain'd only to give Delight, and wherever she came, inspire an Universal Cheerfulness.

These two accomplish'd and lovely Persons from even their very Childhood had been Lovers, and the Intimacy which had ever been between their Families, made the Parents of both observe this growing Passion with pleasure; neither of them having any Reasons, at that time, but to be satisfy'd that such a Tenderness might hereafter be compleated in Marriage. As their Years encreased, so did their mutual Ardors also; and Nature soon informing them what 'twas they long'd for, *Bellcour*, as it was the Business of his Sex, first declar'd the passionate Wishes of his enamour'd Soul, which *Alathia* receiv'd with a modest Contentment in her Eyes; and the pleasing Perturbation of her Thoughts at entering into this new Manner of Conversation, spread a sweet Disorder thro' all her Air and Features, which added fresh Charms to those which had already cap-

tivated her transported Adorer. Ah how delightful are the first Emotions of Desire! What gay Ideas does Infant Passion represent! How perfectly happy were now the enamour'd Youth, and melting Maid; but soon, alas! the blissful Dawn was overspread with Clouds of Care, and threatening Storms of Woe. Love had so far overcome the Bashfulness of the fair *Alathia's* Nature, that she permitted him to ask the Consent of both their Parents for the Consummation of their mutual Wishes: nor had he any cause to fear a repulse from either, especially from *Maraphill*, so was his Father call'd; having often heard him speak of *Alathia* as of a Person whom he infinitely approv'd of.

Being told he was alone in his Closet, he chose that Opportunity to acquaint him with his Inclinations. He found him busily employed in reading a Letter, the Contents of which seem'd very much to have pleas'd him; and as soon as he perceiv'd his Son *Bellcour*, said he to him with a more than ordinary Chearfulness in his Voice and Eyes: You are come very opportunely, I was about to send for you.—You have often heard me speak of a good old Friend, call'd *Boanarus*; I thought him long since dead, he having left his Country in discontent some Years ago, and taken up his Habitation in *Jamaica*;

maica; but, contrary to my hopes or expectations, he is still living, and now on his Voyage home, bringing with him immense Riches, and a Daughter who is his only Child, and they say, the Paragon of her Sex for Beauty and all useful Accomplishments.—— But you shall see, *continued he*, what he writes. In speaking these Words, he gave him the Letter; which he no sooner took in his Hands, than he began to tremble, imagining from the first mention of the Daughter of *Boanarus*, what it was that had inspir'd so unusual a Satisfaction in his Father: which Conjecture he was presently confirm'd in, when he read these Lines.

To my very good Friend, the Worthby
M A R A P H I L L.

“ T H A T I writ not to you before,
 “ was neither owing to my want
 “ of Love, nor a mistrust of yours; but
 “ having nothing to acquaint you with
 “ for a long time, but a continued Series
 “ of Misfortunes, I thought it wou'd denote but little Friendship in me, to put
 “ yours to the pain of compassionating
 “ those Ills which were no way in your
 “ power to ease.—— But since Fortune
 “ has, at last, blest me with her Smiles,
 “ I gladly communicate to you my Affairs.”

“ fairs.—By some Services I was so hap-
 “ py to do a grateful *Indian*, I became
 “ so dear to his Esteem, that dying a few
 “ Weeks ago, he made me the Heir of
 “ all his Wealth, which, in Money and
 “ Goods, amounts to no less than 400000
 “ Crowns.—Now, my dear *Maraphill*,
 “ I return with pleasure to my native
 “ Country, and your more valuable Socie-
 “ ty; which, without flattery, I assure you,
 “ has been the chief Loss I have regret-
 “ ted.—My Girl *Mirtamene*, who you
 “ knew a little one, is grown a Woman,
 “ and all I have now living of my once
 “ numerous Family. —If your Son *Bell-*
 “ *cour* has yet escap’d the Snares of *Cu-*
 “ *pid*, I should rejoice to find him capable
 “ of that Passion in her favour; and as
 “ what I have, is to descend to her, I
 “ should die blest to know the Son of him
 “ I most esteem on Earth, the Possessor
 “ of it.—I assure you she is such as,
 “ without a Parent’s Vanity, must be al-
 “ lowed to have as considerable a Share
 “ of Beauty as most of her Sex; then for
 “ her Education, when in the *worst* of
 “ Circumstances, I took care it should be
 “ in a manner as might not shame the
 “ *best*.—— But the Merchant from
 “ whose hands you receive this, can give
 “ you an exact Account of what she is,
 “ and has too great a love for Truth, to
 “ flatter

“ flatter her in the Description he ſhall
 “ give you of her.— I wou’d have ſent
 “ her Picture, but in this Country there
 “ are but few Artiſts.—Beſides, you will
 “ in a few Months, if the Winds continue
 “ favourable, ſee the Original. — I de-
 “ ſign to ſet ſail from this Place in a ſhort
 “ time ; but having this Opportunity,
 “ wou’d not omit this brief Recital of
 “ what has befallen me : the reſt, when
 “ we meet, you ſhall more fully be in-
 “ formed of, by

Your ever faithfully

Affectionate Friend,

and Humble Servant,

BOANARUS.

What was now the Emotions which
 fill’d the Soul of this enamour’d Youth,
 at News which he foreſaw wou’d be ſo
 killing to his Deſires, and the unchange-
 able Affection he had vow’d *Alathia* !
 His inward Confuſion burſt out in ſuch
 viſible Tokens, that *Maraphill* cou’d not
 but take notice of it ; and changing on a
 ſudden that Countenance of Serenity which
 he had worn a moment before, into one
 wholly the reverſe : What, Son, *demande*
he,

he, in an angry Accent, are you disturb'd at that which rather shou'd give you the most exquisite Satisfaction? — Do you not look on this Offer as a Blessing sent from Heaven? — A Lady of such Beauty, Wit, and Wealth thrown by Providence into your Arms. — 'Sbud ! were I a young Fellow, I shou'd be transported at the Thoughts. — I have spoke to the Merchant mention'd in the Letter, and he tells me that *Mirtamene* is the Wonder of the World. She may be so, Sir ! *humblly reply'd* Bellcour ; but you know that where the Heart is already taken up, all other Charms are ineffectual : — The Beauties of *Alathia* have done the Work of all her Sex, nor is it in the power of any other Woman to erase the Impression she has made. Very well, *interrupted the old Gentleman, extremely incens'd* ; but do you not remember that your Heart ought to have been at my disposal ? — How dare you then to make a Present of it without having first consulted me ? Love is an involuntary and resistless Passion, *said the troubled Son*, and were the Object of it in every thing my Inferior, I know not if all the Precepts of Duty, or of Interest, wou'd have been sufficient to have restrain'd the growing Flame ; but such as *Alathia* is, so worthy of Adoration, so much beyond what any Man can merit,

merit, I had not the least Cause to doubt your Approbation of my Choice, and without making even the least Effort to repel the sweet Invasion, suffer'd her Charms to take possession of my Soul; and it is now so wholly hers, so truly devoted to her, that Heaven itself wants Power to work a Change. How vain wou'd be all Endeavours to represent that Rage which at the boldness of this Declaration swell'd the Breast of *Maraphill*! He upbraided the Ingratitude and impudent Presumption, as he call'd it, of his Son, in Terms the most severe that Tongue cou'd utter, and finding that all he said serv'd rather to strengthen than any way abate the Resolution he had taken, of continuing firm to the Vows he had made *Alathia*, he bid him quit his Presence, and see him no more till he had better learned his Duty: on which, *Bellcour*, making a low Bow, obey'd, saying only as he left the Room, that he might break, by his unkindness, the Strings which held his Heart, but never make it false to his for-ever dear *Alathia*. 'Tis difficult to say whether the Father or the Son thought themselves most unhappy after this Conversation; the one thought it a Hardship not to be sustain'd with patience, that a Son of whose Education he had taken so much Care, and whom he had lov'd with a Tenderness

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infinitely

infinitely superior to what the greatest part of Parents express, shou'd not in all Things be conformable to his Will. The *other* look'd on it as the utmost Rigour of his Fate, that there was a Power on Earth capable of controuling him in Desires which appear'd so reasonable; and tho' he had ever been accusom'd to behave with the utmost *Duty*, resolved now to be disobedient, and thought the *breach* of it a less Crime than *Falshood* or *Ingratitude* to a Mistress, to whom he so often had vow'd an everlasting Faith, and by whom he knew himself to be most tenderly belov'd. The Case indeed on both sides was hard, and scarce can one blame either the *Resentment* of the *Father*, or the *Resolution* of the *Son*, tho' both might have behav'd with greater Moderation; but *Passion* has small regard to *Reason*, and the different ones, with which these two were agitated, were at present too violent to leave room for Consideration in the Breast of either.

Bellcour flew immediately to *Alathia*, and acquainted her with their Misfortune in Terms so moving and so tender, as left her no cause to suspect either the Beauty of her Rival, or his Father's Power wou'd have any effect to make him swerve from that Affection he had sworn to her: foreseeing, however, the Difficulties which
wou'd

wou'd attend their Love, and the almost impossibility there was that they should ever be happy; she endeavour'd to persuade him to a Forgetfulness of her, and a Resignation to his Father's Will: but, alas! all she said on this Head was utter'd with so faint an Accent, and with so little Spirit urg'd, that it was easy to be discover'd how vastly different from the Dictates of her Heart was the Language of her Tongue. Had *Bellcour* but seem'd to give into her Reasons, or but listen'd to them with any show of Consent, 'tis probable the cruel Adherence had been fatal, with so unspeakable a Passion did she regard him: but there was no danger of her being put to that Trial; the inflam'd *Bellcour* could not support this Discourse, a hundred times he interrupted the few Arguments she alledg'd, call'd her Unkind and Cruel, and question'd her Love in such a manner, as wou'd have entirely remov'd all Suspicion of his Truth, if she had been capable to have entertain'd any.——

Ah, *Alathia*! cry'd he, can you pretend to love, yet wish the Object of your Affections for ever lost! — Nay more, *continued he*, can you pretend even Friendship to the Man you wish a Villain! — Have I not sworn, have I not vow'd a thousand, thousand times, I liv'd but for *Alathia*, and wou'd chuse Death rather than

Falshood! ——— No, may just Heaven forsake me, load me with Curses here, and at the Hour of my Death, when most I pray and cry for Mercy, may it be deaf, and not one Saint convey my penitential Sighs, but plunge me down in endless Woe and ever-during Hell, a Companion for Fiends, whenever I become like them, as I must do, to deviate even in Thought from thee; thou Soul of Sweetness, thou lovely Abstract of all that's good in Woman! ——— By these kind of Imprecations did he put a stop to every thing she was about to say, till she was oblig'd to tell him, no Misfortune cou'd be so dreadful to her as that of his being false. They then swore together an eternal Fidelity, each wishing the most unheard of Curses on themselves, if ever they were guilty of a breach of it. In this tender, but melancholy Conversation, they continued for many Hours, not parting till it was very late at Night, and not then without an Assurance of meeting the next Day.

But little did they think, that while by these mutual Promises to each other, they were endeavouring to combat with their ill Stars, and baffle the Decrees of Fate, what was in those Moments acting against their Love. *Maraphill*, full of the Indignation which the Reply of *Bellcour* had

had inspir'd him with, happen'd, by Accident, to meet the Father of *Alathia*, whom accosting with a Countenance very much the contrary of that he had been accustomed to put on to him ; I am told, *said he to him*, that there is a Love-affair carry'd on between your Daughter and my Son, I know not if you are privy to it ; but can assure you, I was entirely ignorant such a thing was in agitation till this Day, else had before acquainted you that I have otherwise dispos'd of *Bellcour*, and shou'd he be refractory to the Choice I have made, shall wholly cast him off.— It will be prudence in you, therefore, not to encourage his too frequent Visits at your House, which, as they are made without my Leave, can terminate in no other Consequence than the dishonour of your Daughter. 'Tis difficult to say whether Surprise or Disdain was more predominant in the Mind of him to whom these Words were address'd ; he knew the Passion which *Bellcour* profess'd for his Daughter, and was also sensible the other cou'd not have been a Stranger to it : the Equality of their Fortunes and Parity of Humours, had made him think there wou'd be no Objections to the Marriage. These Words, therefore, so unexpected, and abrupt, made him extremely wonder what had occasion'd the sudden Alteration : the
greatness

greatness of his Spirit wou'd not, however, suffer him to desire an Explanation, and, by the Example of the other, throwing off all that Freedom with which they had been used to treat each other; if your Son be amorous of *Alathia*, *reply'd* he, there is nothing in it very surprizing, nor is it so, that if I have taken notice of it I shou'd not acquaint you, because I doubted not but what he did was by your permission: — but whether it be so or not, I shall not fail to oblige you in forbidding my Daughter to receive his Visits; nor need I question her Obedience in this point, while I am in a Condition, such as will keep her above the Necessity of being reduc'd to steal a Marriage, or to ask pardon of the Family into which she weds, before she can be receiv'd into it. He had no sooner spoke this, than he flung from the Place, leaving *Maraphill* very well satisfy'd at this breach of their former Friendship, and the assurance that his Pride wou'd certainly make him do as he had said, tho' it were to the breaking of his Daughter's Heart. Happening afterwards into other Company, he came not home till *Bellcour* was departed, and his Daughter gone to Bed; but early in the Morning he sent for her into his Chamber, and charg'd her strictly to see *Bellcour* no more; relating to her, at full, the Discourse

Discourse he had with his Father, and bidding her know herself better than to receive the Addresses of a Man, whose Family look'd on them as an Honour to her. The young Lady fainted away at this Injunction of her Father's, yet had nothing to offer in contradiction to it, only intreated the Liberty of telling *Bellcour* himself the Occasion of the Change she must henceforward observe in her Behaviour to him. It was with some difficulty that the old Gentleman granted this Request ; but the trouble he was in to see her thus afflicted, and the respect he had for *Bellcour*, who he found had no share in what his Father did, at last prevail'd upon him.

What was now the Meeting of these unhappy Lovers! *Alathia* receiv'd the wondring *Bellcour* with streaming Eyes, and such a Storm of Sighs, as wou'd not, for some moments, allow her the liberty of Speech: Silent a-while both stood, he fear'd to ask what she as yet had not the power of revealing ; struggling, at last, tho' half suffocated with the rising Grief, she brought forth in stammering and scarce intelligible Accents, Oh, *Bellcour*! *Bellcour*! I must see you no more.— Take now your everlasting Leave of lost *Alathia*! — She said no more, the Efforts she had made to utter this, exhausted the
small

small Stock of Grief, the over-powring Passion had left her Mistress of; and she fell fainting in her Lover's Arms. To conceive what it was that *Bellcour* felt at the hearing Words like these, and the Condition to which the speaking of them had reduc'd the Person, who, at that time, was a thousand times dearer to him than his Life; one must be possess'd of all the various and perplexing Passions, which dethrone Reason, and torment Humanity.— His less soft Nature refusing him the ease of Tears, with wild Distraction his whirling Brain turn'd round.— His Bosom swell'd almost to bursting; his Heart was torn with Anguish unutterable! unsupportable! He rav'd, he tore his very Flesh; nay, even, roar'd out with the extremity of Pain.—'Tis certain, that at this cruel moment, Whips, Racks, or scalding Sulphur, were Tortures inferior to those he suffer'd. But *Alathia* recovering from her Swoon, and beholding him thus, a-while seem'd to forget her own Despair, to mitigate the Pangs of his. With Expressions compos'd of the most endearing Softness, did she endeavour to recall his wandering Reason, and restore him to Tranquillity. — 'Tis true, *said she*, I am forbid by him whom yet I never disobey'd, to hear your Vows, receive your Ardors, or even to see you more; but, oh my

my *Bellcour* ! Love is superior to all the Precepts of Duty, and of Prudence. I cannot *live* in an eternal Absence from you ; nor can I *die* while I perceive my Life of so much moment to your Peace.— Yes, yes, in spite of all our cruel Fathers can do, we will not, must not be separated.— Oh ! therefore give not way to this impatient Rage, but rather, while we have the blessed Opportunity, contrive some Way by which we may be just to the Oath we mutually have taken. These last Words resettled some part of that Composure in his Mind, which his late Disorders seem'd entirely to have banish'd ; and looking stedfastly on her, Divine *Alathia*, said he, how unworthy is the Son of such a mercenary Father, to receive this heavenly Goodness ! ——— Let us talk no more, interrupted *she*, of either of our Fathers, but think what is best for us to do, to avert the Ruin they intend to bring upon our Love. What possibility is there, return'd he, but, by giving the Church's Sanction to the Marriage of our Hearts, put it past their power to divide us more ? But then a Father's Curse, said *she*, I tremble when I think what Woes offended Heaven denounces against a Breach of Duty to those to whom we owe our Being ; besides, were there a Hope that Sin could be absolved, by what unhop'd
D, Means

Means cou'd we award the threatening
 Stings of Want! how shun the World's
 Derision, when Poverty with all her mean
 Attendants sits at our unfrequented Doors,
 and frights the wary Passenger from En-
 trance! ——— Should we not sit alone
 unaided, unfriended, expos'd to Shame, to
 Censure? and who can tell but when thus
 Desolate, thus forsaken of all, but even
 we ourselves may join with Fortune, and
 add to our own Misery by a too late Repen-
 tance; and regretting the fond Folly which
 brought us to this Wretchedness, upbraid
 by turns each other? Oh never! never!
cry'd Bellcour, cou'd I be guilty of such
 Baseness, much less cou'd thy angelick
 Nature descend to mean Reproach, or
 poor Reviling: But tho' I could be con-
 tent, for thee, to suffer all the Woes which
 formful Fancy can invent, yet cou'd I
 not support the Thought of any Ill be-
 falling thee. ——— The Secret of our Mar-
 riage must, therefore, be with Care con-
 ceal'd; nor think that when a Husband's
 Name shall give me power over thy Beau-
 ties, I will require the Possession of them,
 but at such times as when *Argus-Ey'd* Sus-
 picion shall be lull'd asleep, and I unseen,
 unthought of, may securely steal to thy
 dear Arms. ——— Thus for a while we may
 delude the busy Care of our too cruel
 Parents; and while they think us most
 at

at *distance*, be as *near* as Hope can ask. — Who knows what Revolutions may hereafter happen in our Affairs? — A sad one lately has arriv'd, another may ensue to make us yet more *blest*, than this has made us *wretched*. To these he added many other Arguments to persuade her to yield to his Desires; and as every thing he said seem'd dictated by the fondest Passion, and the strictest Honour; too well she *lov'd*, to be capable of refusing him, and it was agreed between them, that she should pretend to her Father to have done as he commanded her; and that the very next Morning after the ensuing Day, she should meet him at a Shop where she used sometimes to buy Things, and to which if she should happen to be watched, there wou'd be no Suspicion of the intent for which she came, and that from thence they shou'd take Coach and go to the House of a Divine, who on the account of some Affairs relating to the Publick had been suspended, and who was well known to *Belcour*; and after he had join'd their Hands, each to return to their respective Habitations, to the end that no Mistrust might arise of their having been together, in either of their Families.

Alathia play'd her Part so well, tho' it was her first Task of Hypocrisy, that

her Father was entirely deceiv'd by it ; and having ever found her most obedient to his Will in all things, did not doubt but she would continue so in this, tho' he believ'd she cou'd not be so without reluctance, and which indeed she feign'd, the better to delude him, and prevent him from having too observing an Eye over her Actions for the future. *Bellcour*, altho' a Man (strange Paradox !) was less successful in Dissimulation ; but he had not yet learn'd the Practices of his betraying Sex, and was not half perfect in the undoing Art : he had never made professions of Love to any but *Alathia*, and as they were sincere, and tended only to the attainment of his Wishes on honourable Terms ; he stood not in need of trying his Skill that way : the Pleasure he conceived at disappointing all the Measures which cou'd be taken to deprive him of his adorable Mistress, was too great to be conceal'd, in spite of his Efforts to the contrary ; the secret Satisfaction smil'd in his Eyes, and sat triumphant on each Feature of his Face. *Maraphill* who by his Behaviour to him in the Closet, and what he had learn'd by his Deportment since by the Servants, expected to have seen in him the most evident Tokens of Despair ; was so much surpriz'd when he perceiv'd him the contrary, that he cou'd not but
 imagine

imagine there was a Motive for it more than he knew, or shou'd be pleas'd with: He therefore order'd all his Actions shou'd be observ'd with the utmost diligence, and every Motion watch'd; which being accordingly done, he was seen to go into that Shop, and soon after take Coach with *Alathia*. This Account put him into the utmost perplexity, and he resolv'd some way or other to disappoint their future Meetings; but how, he cou'd not yet determine. *Bellcour* in the mean time was in little less perplexity; 'tis true, he was married to the Charmer of his Soul, but *Consummation* had not past, that dear Reward of his long suffering Passion was yet to come, and his impatient Wishes for that happy Moment, render'd him little less disorder'd than the Emotions of his Despair had done. But *Alathia*, who on parting from him, had promis'd to contrive some Means to see him soon again, forgot not what she had said; and counterfeiting an excessive Melancholy, entreated leave of her Father to retire into the Country. Change of Place, *she told him*, affording variety of Objects, might obliterate the Memory of the old ones, and enable her in time to forget *Bellcour*, which it was impossible she shou'd do while she continued where every Thing she saw wou'd serve but to remind her
 of

of him. This Request appear'd too reasonable to be refus'd, and every Thing was prepared with all convenient speed for her removal. *Bellcour*, for whose sake she had contriv'd this Stratagem, was inform'd of it by a Letter she found means of conveying to him; and also the Method she wou'd have him take, to prevent any discovery of their Correspondence, or the Visits he shou'd make her in that Retirement to which she was going. She had formerly been at the House of a Relation, which she remembred to have stood in a By-lane, a good distance from any other: the nearest in the Neighbourhood was an Inn; this was the Place she made choice of, because she thought that *Bellcour*, as well as other Passengers, might sometimes take up his Lodgings in that Inn, and they might have the Opportunity of indulging their mutual Wishes with each other's Society, as often as he could make a pretence to stay from home all Night. The Father of this tender Bride having little Suspicion of the Deceit she had put upon him, sent her without any other Company than such as she should find in the Stage-Coach, knowing there were Servants sufficient to attend her where she was going, and also because she seem'd not to be very well pleased with the Maid who at present waited

waited on her; and told him she would hire one to her own mind in the Country, where there were many Farmers Daughters who wou'd be glad to serve her. Of this the joyful Bridegroom being appriz'd, met her at the Inn where she was to lie; and receiving her with all the Transports of the most unfeigned Affection, secure and uninterrupted, took possession of his Right, and made *Alathia* now indeed a Wife. All Night they past in Joys which none but happy Lovers know; but proportion'd to the Bliss they had shar'd, was their mutual disquiet, when the unwelcome Morn reminded them that they must part.—The Coach got ready very early, and the late transported Pair had their tender Adieus cut off by the rude Summons of the too hasty Driver. *Alathia* arriv'd in a few hours safe at the House of her Cousin, where she was welcom'd with the utmost chearfulness, and *Bellcour* rid back to Town; far from imagining his Father knew he had been from home all Night, having charg'd all the Family not to let him into the Secret.

But he had not been in the House half an Hour before he found he had been deceiv'd in his Conjecture. With a Storm on his Brow did the angry *Maraphill* accost him, told him he was perfectly well acquainted with his Proceedings, and that he

he was truly inform'd; that in spite of his positive Commands to the contrary, he had continued his former Pretensions to *Alathia*. He utter'd these Accusations with so assur'd an Air, that *Bellcour* doubted not but that every Thing he had done was known to him, and thinking all denials would be vain, imagin'd it would be better he shou'd believe he had been guilty of it, *before* than *since* the Knowledge of his aversion to it. How impossible was it for me, Sir, *said he*, to foresee your good Thoughts of *Alathia* shou'd so suddenly alter and become the very Reverse of what they had been! — I hope you will not, therefore, think it a Crime too great to be forgiven, if presuming on your Goodness, and confident of your Approbation, the violence of my Passion made those Promises which I confess shou'd, in the first place, have been authoriz'd by you. 'Sdeath, what Promises! *interrupted the old Man fiercely*, you are not sure contracted? — And then by his silence, guessing the worst; Heavens! 'tis not impossible but that you may be married! — but if you have dar'd to treat me in this manner, by all that we adore above, or fear below, thou art an Alien to my Family and Name; never will I see thee, but with Horror, nor mention thee but with Curses. — Oh all ye Powers! *continued he,*

he, if *Bellcour* be the Husband of *Alatbia*, let every kind of Mischief fall upon him, let Poverty and Shame be the least of Evils that shall attend him; but *Guilt* be added to his *Wretchedness*, Fiends haunt his Steps, and sudden Death overtake him, and plunge him deep in everlasting Hell. How terrible were Words like these, proceeding from a *Father's* Mouth! The Soul of *Bellcour* shrunk back with Horror, and wild Confusion sat on all his Form; the Disorders he perceiv'd in him, together with his Silence, made *Maraphill* believe what was indeed the Truth; and transported with the most vehement Indignation that ever enter'd the Heart of Man, he drew his Sword, and taking him by the Throat, utter'd unheard-of Imprecations on himself, if he did not, that moment, plunge it in his Breast, unless he spoke, and inform'd him of the depth of his Engagements with *Alatbia*; yet at the same time renewing his Curses on him, if he had proceeded too far to be recall'd. It was not the Fear of *Death*, but the eternal *Displeasure* of a *Father* to whom he had all the dutious Regard that Son cou'd pay, which so long depriv'd him of the power of Utterance, and made him now not dare avow the Truth. Throwing himself on his Knees, he entreated him to moderate his Rage,

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protesting to him in the most solemn manner, that nothing in the World cou'd be so dreadful to him as the thoughts of offending so good a Parent; but still evading any direct Answer to the Question propos'd to him: which instead of abating, encreas'd both the Doubt and Vexation of *Maraphill*. To the utmost pitch of Extravagance did the Tempest of his Passion hurry him, and again demanding of him if he were married or not, he repeated those Curses with redoubled Fury, which he had before pronounced if he were. I am not married, *answered the trembling Bellcour, faintly*, any otherwise than in the Wishes of my devoted Heart. Then I again receive thee to my Love, *resum'd his Father*, and will take care to put it out of even thy own power ever to forfeit it. — You must resolve, *continu'd he, going to the Door, and bringing in a Person whom till that moment Bellcour had never seen*, to go with this Gentleman where he shall conduct you by my Orders. — He will find means of diverting the Folly of the present Passion of your Soul, and render it fit for that more noble one, the charming *Mirtamene* at her arrival cannot fail of inspiring. What was now the Condition of this unhappy Lover, this distracted Husband? From this Destiny there was no Reprieve. *Maraphill*
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continuing his Discourse, told him he must be gone that very Hour, that unknown to him he had taken care to have his Clothes pack'd up, and provided Horses, Servants, and all Conveniencies for him, and that he wou'd allow no longer time than wou'd suffice to ask his Blessing, till he began his Journey. 'Tis utterly impossible to describe the present Conflict in the Thoughts of poor *Bellcour*, such as it was in reality.—More than once did he open his Mouth to reveal the whole Truth, and confess that he had deceived him ; but the remembrance of his late Rage, and those heart-rending Curses he had laid upon him, deterr'd him from doing it. In the midst of the most terrible Disorders the Mind can know, sometimes a ready Thought presents itself; *Bellcour* had now one which flatter'd him with a View of Success, and made him imagine wou'd be an Expedient to deliver him from this Exigence. Having a little paus'd upon it, he entreated the favour of *Maraphill* to have his private Ear for something he had to communicate of the greatest Importance ; to which he consenting, desir'd the Gentleman, who was to be the Guardian of his Son, to leave the Room. On which, Tho' the Ceremony of the Church, *said he*, has not yet past between *Alathia* and myself, yet since you are return'd to a Disposition,

fition, which encourages me to confess the Truth, I must inform you, Sir, that the most solemn Vows have past between us, and that not only my own Conscience forbids me to be the Husband of another, but also that the Promises I have made her, are of such a nature, as if broke, wou'd render me liable to Punishment by an earthly Court. — Tut, *reply'd the old Man*, the Law takes no Cognizance of a *Verbal Contract* ; — I hope she has nothing under your Hand. Both Hand and Seal have made it firm and valid, *resum'd the other*, and no less than the Forfeit of the whole Estate which on your Death descends to me, is the Penalty, if without her consent I wed another : — How impossible is it therefore to obey you ? — For I protest so truly am I touched with a just Sense of my Crime in entring into this Engagement without having first receiv'd Permission from you; that all the Tenderneſs I have for *Alathia*, cannot absolve, or make me not repent it. If this be true, *said Maraphill*, *more troubled, but less incens'd than he had been*, perhaps when she shall know how little I am able to endure the thoughts of this Alliance, and the Revenge I have sworn to take on you whenever you shall dare make good what you have promis'd, she will be prevail'd on to resign the Power your Folly has given

ven you over her. Doubt it not, Sir, *resum'd* Bellcour, (*glad to find his Father come so readily into the Imposition he was putting on him*) I am not by the Contract bound to marry her, but not to be the Husband of another; the same Obligation too is laid on her, and when she shall be told how impossible it is she ever shou'd be mine, she doubtless will rejoice to be deliver'd from a restriction no way agreeable to her Youth and Beauty: ——— Permit me, therefore, *pursued he*, once more to visit her, and by revealing to her the Truth of this Affair, regain my Liberty, and restore hers. *Maraphill* stood in a fix'd Posture, intently observing him all the time he had been speaking, and perceiving nothing in his Countenance which cou'd give him room to doubt the truth of what he said, agreed to his Request, and told him he should defer it no longer than the next Day; but that to prevent him from making any other use of the Opportunity he allow'd him of seeing her, than such as he pretended; he must consent that the Person whom he had just now seen, shou'd accompany him so near the House where she was, that no Person cou'd go in or out without his knowledge. To which *Bellcour* was not at all averse; but having assur'd his Father that he wou'd say and do every thing that was proper to

to engage her to give up the Contract; he told him, that he hoped he after would not insist on his leaving him, protesting that in all his Life he had never felt so sensible a grief, as that which the Thoughts of being banished from his Presence had involv'd him in. To which *Maraphill* reply'd, that on his Honour he shou'd not.

By the whole Behaviour of *Bellcour*, and what has been said of the passionate Tenderness, with which, from even his Childhood, he had regarded *Alathia*; it cannot be imagin'd that he had any other meaning in this than to gain time, and prevent his Father from sending him to some Place where it would be impossible for him either to see, or send to her; and he related what had pass'd with so much Sincerity, that she had not the least cause to doubt of his Affection; nor that he had any other Design in what he requir'd of her, than by lulling asleep the Fears and Watchfulness of *Maraphill*, they might for the future enjoy the Society of each other without interruption, or the danger of being for ever separated. Having therefore an implicate Faith in the Love and Honour of her dear Husband, and unable to support the Thoughts of his being remov'd from her to a Place of which she was wholly ignorant, and where it was not to be doubted but that he wou'd
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be too vigilantly watch'd, to have any Opportunity of even sending to her; the Joys his *Presence* yielded, join'd to the terrors of a long *Absence*, made her hesitate but a very little to sign a Release from all former Contracts and Obligations. He told her, that now there wou'd be no danger of his being compell'd to leave the Town, and for that reason entreated she wou'd return to it as soon as possible, because being so near, he cou'd have many Opportunities of seeing her at some House which he wou'd hereafter contrive; which, while she was at so great a distance, was not possible to be done without Suspicion, or perhaps a Discovery, to the total Ruin of their Love. She having assur'd him of her ready Compliance with his Will, he took his leave; and finding the Gentleman, who had accompany'd him, waiting in a Field within a Bow-shot of the House, they return'd home together; where *Bellcour* showing the Release, was joyfully receiv'd by his Father. For two days, he had not the least reason but to be satisfy'd with what he had done. He had his liberty to go where he pleas'd, had no Spies sent after him, as heretofore, and doubted not but all the Jealousies of *Maraphill* were now lull'd asleep; but how strangely was he surpriz'd, when on the third he saw the Coach and Six come
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to the Door, several Horses for the Servants to ride upon, a vast deal of Luggage pack'd up, and all necessary Preparations made for a long Journey! As he was debating in his Mind what could be the reason of it, or who it was that was about to travel, his Father came into the Room, where he was looking out of the Window, and taking him by the Hand, *Bellcour*, said he, I am going into the Country for some time, you must accompany me some part of the Way. The Colour of *Bellcour* chang'd two or three times, while *Maraphill* was speaking these few Words: but not daring to refuse a Command which seem'd so reasonable; May I presume, Sir, said he, to ask the Cause which has induced you to so unexpected a removal? I will inform you as we go, answer'd the Father, and immediately stept into the Coach, where he was follow'd by his astonish'd Son, and presently after by that old Gentleman who had been recommended as a Governour to *Bellcour*, and who had accompany'd him in the Visit he made to *Alathia*. The sight of him gave something of a shock to *Bellcour*, tho' at that time he could not account for it. But long did he not remain in Suspence: When they were past the Town a few Miles; Now Son, said *Maraphill* to him, I will reveal to you, what hitherto the Fears of your foolish

foolish Passion for *Alathia* has oblig'd me to keep a Secret.—— You are now on your Journey to a Place whence till you are the Husband of *Mirtamene* you must not expect to return : —— Not that I will break my Word with you ; I promis'd that if you procur'd your Liberty from *Alathia*, I wou'd not banish you my Presence ; and to the end, that I may keep it inviolably, I go with you : —— but do not imagine that I believ'd you enough cured of that Disobedience you formerly avowed, as to trust you in a City where you might every Hour have an Opportunity of disappointing my Designs.—— The Release you have from *Alathia* discharges you from all past Engagements, but does not imply but you may hereafter enter into others, perhaps, more destructive to my Hopes : I have therefore taken this only infallible Way to put it beyond your power to contradict my Will and your own good Fortune ; which I doubt not but I shall hear you, one day, acknowledge depends on the Possession of that accomplish'd young Lady I have made choice of for you. He had no sooner left speaking, than the old Gentleman began a long Discourse on the Duty of Children to their Parents, and how little capable Youth was, especially when blinded by Passion, of knowing what

was best for them. *Bellcour*, who for some time had been prevented from interrupting him by the strange mixture of his Thoughts, had now no longer Patience; but looking on him with the utmost fierceness, bid him be silent, telling him that however the Duty of a Son might oblige him to offer nothing in opposition to what a Father said, yet he knew of no Motive which should oblige him to listen to such Remonstrances from any other Person. *Maraphill*, unwilling to exasperate him, prevented the other from returning any thing which might have done it, by assuring him that he should find nothing but what might serve to divert him. To represent the perplexity which this unhappy Lover now found himself involv'd in, would be as impossible, as it is to give to painted Flames the same Force as the Reality with fatal Scorplings boasts: The imprison'd Passions warring in his Breast, struggled for vent, and scarce cou'd be restrain'd by all the Considerations of Duty, Interest or Affection.—He did, however, gain so much the power over them, as not to utter the least Word at which his Father cou'd take Offence; but in his sullen Looks his Discontent too plainly was discover'd for him to have conceal'd it, if he had attempted it.—This gave an

an alarm to *Maraphill*, and made him not only think that he had done well in removing, but also that it was necessary to watch him with the utmost Care, lest he should escape from the Place where they were going, and return to *Alathia*; and all the time of their Journey, which was five Days, he never suffer'd him one moment from his Sight, obliging him to lie in the same Chamber, and never quit his Presence on any pretence whatsoever. Nor when they were arriv'd at the House, which he had privately hir'd for this Purpose, did he in the least abate his former Vigilance, keeping him still in his own Eye, or that of the old Gentleman who came with them.

This Retreat was in a little Village near one of the most considerable Sea-ports of the Kingdom, and where in all probability *Boanarus* wou'd land, it being the first Harbour in his way from *Jamaica*. It was therefore the design of *Maraphill* to be there ready to receive him, and see the Marriage celebrated before he returned to the Metropolis. *Bellcour* soon perceived his Intention, but tho' his inventive Brain was ever on the Rack to find out some Means to evade it without discovering the Truth, yet did nothing present itself which appear'd possible to be

accomplish'd ; that which he thought most feasible, was to acquaint the young Lady, in private, with the Secret of his Marriage, and the terrible Curse his Father had laid on him, if he refus'd to obey him ; and then entreat she wou'd commiserate his unhappy Circumstance, and by openly declaring a dislike to him, take from him the blame of breaking off. This it was that he resolv'd to do the first Opportunity he had of speaking to her after her Arrival, which now was every day expected.

Maraphill, who, as he had said, did all that was possible to make this retirement supportable to his Son, and to obliterate the Memory of *Alathia*, contriv'd one Day a great Hunting-match, to which all the Gentlemen for many Miles round the Country were invited. *Bellcour* had always been a great lover of this Diversion ; but the Pleasure he now conceived at hearing it design'd, sprung from a different Cause than meerly the Sport which the rest of the Company propos'd to themselves : He had hopes that in the eagerness of following the Chace, he might have the Opportunity of escaping those more than *Argus*-Eyes, which had continually been a Spy upon him, and that he might cross the Country, and by unfrequented Roads

Roads he past the search of any who shou'd be sent in pursuit of him, and get to some place where he might conceal himself till the Danger of marrying *Mirtamene* should be over ; believing with reason, that a young Lady of her reported Beauty, Fortune, and Accomplishments, cou'd not hear what he had done to avoid marrying, without being possess'd of a disdain for him, which would oblige her to refuse him, if offer'd to her afterwards. He was not deceiv'd in some part of his Conjecture ; they started variety of Game, and the Company dividing into different Parties, he easily rode from his Observers ; and *Maraphill* believing he was with the old Gentleman, and he, thinking he was in company with his Father, neither made any Enquiry after him, for a long time. In the mean while, he had cross'd several Roads, and was got into a Wood, some 10 or 12 Miles distant from the Hunters ; passing along then more slowly than he had done, he began to deliberate within himself which way it was best for him to direct his Course, or whether he had any Friend in the World to whom he cou'd apply himself for refuge, till the time of his Father's displeasure should be over, or if it were not better to conceal himself among Strangers. As he was in
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this Dilemma, he heard a Woman's Voice in the most terrible Shrieks that ever pierc'd his Ears ; looking about him to see if he cou'd discover from whom they came, he spy'd two Horses, one of which, by the Furniture, he knew to belong to one of the Female Sex, the other had on it a Man's Saddle ; but both being richly accoured, made him not doubt but that they belong'd to some Persons of distinction, and that there was some extraordinary Piece of Villany in hand: Being naturally generous and brave, he clapt Spurs to his Horse, and gallop'd towards the Place whence the Cry proceeded. Still as he drew nearer he heard the Voice more plain, and at last, to his great Amazement, saw a Man well habited, but with a Devil-like Pierceness in his Countenance, holding by the Hair a young Maid of such exquisite Beauty, that, till his Eyes were witness of it, he could not have believ'd had been in Nature; the darling Whiteness of her delicate Skin, which her torn Robes disclos'd in greater measure than else her Modesty would have permitted ; her shining Eyes sparkling with Rage, her fine-form'd Mouth, her lovely Hair which the *Barbarian* had wound round his remorseless Hand, her Shape, her Stature, and that heavenly Innocence and Softness, which,

which, even in the midst of Terror and Indignation was conspicuous, made her appear an Angel seiz'd by a Fiend.— Oh ! if you have Honour, Generosity, or Pity, *cry'd she out, as soon as she saw* Bellcour, protect and save a wretched Maid from Violation ! — His Soul, which before was so wholly taken up with admiration, now felt those Emotions she had invok'd, and presently recollecting what it was he ought to do, he drew his Sword, and bid the Villain turn and defend the Crime he was about to act, or swear he would give over all Intentions of perpetrating it, and demand forgiveness of that Excellence he had attempted to prophan. The Person to whom this Demand was made, smiled at the latter part of it with a disdainful Air, but was ready enough to answer to the former ; he had his Sword out almost as soon as *Bellcour*, who leaping from his Horse, as scorning to take an unmanly Advantage, receiv'd him with equal fierceness : but the *Arm* of his Antagonist was little able to obey the Dictates of his *Heart* ; he wounded him at the second or third Pass, and without receiving any hurt himself, at last disarm'd him. Now ask your Life of her whom you so impudently have sinn'd against, *said* Bellcour.

—I value not my Life, *reply'd the other*; her Cruelty has made it hateful to me, and since all Means of obtaining her are ineffectual, look on Death as the only Blessing that is left me. Live then, *resumed* Bellcour, and the Curse of hopeless Love attend thee, since by such base and abhor'd Ways thou soughtest the gratification of thy Passion. He had scarce spoke these Words, when the Person to whom they were address'd flung suddenly away, not repenting of his purpose, but repining that he had been depriv'd of the Power to accomplish it. Tho' *Bellcour* wanted not Gallantry, and no Man in the world knew better how to express himself on all Occasions; yet did he now stand mute, and wanted utterance for the big Wonder of his admiring Soul; while the fair Author of it, approaching him, thank'd him for the Service he had done her, in terms so obliging and so full of sweetness, that it added a new Charm to her already too powerful Beauty. — If in the wild confusion of her Rage and Fright she was so lovely, how ravishing now must she appear, when soft Serenity compos'd each delicate Feature, and Joy for her Deliverance seem'd to revel in her Eyes, play'd in a thousand dimpled Graces round her Mouth, and sent the returning Blood in
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rosy Blushes to her Cheeks! Aw'd, charm'd and dazled, scarce could he reply to what she said; but Recollection at length getting the better of Surprize, he told her that he should ever look on that Hour as the most fortunate of his whole Life, because it had given him the Opportunity of rescuing her Innocence: but if she thought the little he had done worthy of a Recompence, it should be to let him know by what means she came to be reduc'd to so great a danger. The Story, *said she*, is too long to be related now, but if you will add to the Obligation you have already conferr'd upon me, so far as to conduct me to the Place where that vile Wretch was to attend me, you there, generous Stranger, shall meet with those who better know how to treat your Merit, than a young Maid, whose little Acquaintance with the World may well excuse the small Acknowledgments you have yet receiv'd. Ah, Madam! *cry'd he*, 'tis from yourself alone that I should think it a glory to be prais'd; be pleas'd to let me know who you are, and permit me sometimes the Blessing of gazing on your Charms; I ask no other recompence for all I have done, or all that I hereafter may perhaps endure. These last Words were accompany'd with a Sigh, and a Look

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which had in it so persuasive an Eloquence, that the Lady was sensibly affected with it, and feeling for him something in her Heart which she already began to comprehend the meaning of; I know not, *said she*, bound as I am to you by the greatest Obligation that Woman can receive, if I may promise you a Grant of the latter Part of your Request; — because, *continued she, after a little pause, and with an Air which denoted a secret Dissatisfaction*, there are Ties which leave one not the power to do as we cou'd wish. You are not married? *interrupted he, equally troubled*. The Ceremony has not pass'd, *answer'd she*, nor indeed have I yet seen my future Master; and for that reason cannot form a Judgment how far I may presume, when I hereafter shall become his Wife. *Bellcour* cou'd not here forbear looking on the Sympathy between their Fortunes, as something ominous, and immediately related to her the Destiny which was decreed for him, and that his Father was every day in expectation of the arrival of a Lady from *Jamaica*, to whom he design'd he shou'd be married. He had no sooner concluded on this Head, than the beautiful Stranger demanded hastily of him, what was the Name of his intended Bride; for,

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said she, I know many People in that Island, and may probably give you a better Account of her than you can have from any other Person. Which he making no scruple to reveal, *Mirtamene*, Madam, *said he*, is the Name of her whom my Father has made choice of for me ; I have hitherto been much averse to the devoting myself, where *Duty* and not *Love* is the incitement ; — perhaps, too, she may have the same Sentiments ; — at least I hope so, because as I have no Heart to give, I should be sorry to receive a Present, for which I can make no valuable Return. Never did any Face discover a more visible Alteration than did that of the Lady at this Discourse ; a perfect Satisfaction, almost to a degree of Rapture, smil'd on every Feature. *Bellcour* could not avoid observing it, but could not guess the Cause ; and asking her if she did not think his Father too severe in the Constraint he put upon him ; You have yet never seen *Mirtamene*, *said she*, and 'tis my Opinion she will appear more agreeable to you than you imagine ; as for my own ease, I am willing to believe the Man design'd by Heaven for my Husband will do to me. — But, *continued she*, if you repent not of the Offer your Complaisance some moments since made me hope, I will conduct you

to those who are able to make you perfectly sensible what *Mirtamene* is. He then took her by the Hand, and led her to the Place where he had seen the Horses fastned, telling her as they went, that he would willingly conduct her to the farthest part of the World; and that nothing cou'd be more delightful to him, than to find she had a long Journey, that so he might not too soon be depriv'd of the Pleasure of attending her. Having set her on her Horse, and mounted himself on his own, he desir'd she would acquaint him which way (for there were two Roads) it was that she design'd to go. But she told him, she was entirely a Stranger in those Parts; but that the Name of the place which put a period to her Travels, for some time, was *Plimouth*. Nothing could be more surpriz'd than was *Bellcour* at her naming that Town; it was impossible for him to go there, without being heard of by his Father, and must therefore be oblig'd to return home : and he began to look on this Adventure, which drew him as it were whether he would or not, back to his Obedience, as if design'd by Heaven to prevent his forsaking a Father, who had always so tenderly lov'd him, that, till the Offer of Marriage which *Boanarus* had made for him with
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his Daughter, he had never denied him any thing his Wishes crav'd. He was so much taken up with these Cogitations, that he interrupted not the Lady, who seem'd also deeply musing in hers; and they said little more to each other, till they met some Servants whom *Maraphill*, missing his Son, had sent out in search of him, and who now attended him and his fair Charge to the Town: where being arriv'd, she ask'd of some People she saw standing in the Street, where it was that the Passengers who lately came ashore were lodged; which being inform'd of, they rode up to the House, where as soon as she alighted she was receiv'd with a Transport of Joy by a grave old Gentleman who stood at the Door. But as soon as the first Gratulations of Love and Tenderness on both sides were over; Where, *said he*, is *Clavio*, and who is this Gentleman by whom you are accompany'd? Oh, Sir, *reply'd she*, I have such a Story to relate of the Villany of that execrable Wretch, as you would scarcely credit, had I not this Witness of it.—— With these Words she presented *Bellcour*. To this generous Man, *said she*, I owe my Life, my Honour, the Pleasure of beholding you again; and in fine, every thing that's dear and valuable to me. It is not to be doubted but
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that *Bellcour* now receiv'd all the retributions that Words could yield, tho' longer and more strenuous perhaps they would have been, had not the Gentleman's curiosity prevailed on him to defer some part of the Thanks he design'd to make, to another time, and made him impatient for the Particulars of an Adventure which at present seem'd so mysterious. Tho' nothing, *said he*, ought to be more pleasing to me than to pay my Acknowledgments to him who has conferr'd such Obligations on so dear a Child; yet forgive me, Sir, if I a while give truce to my Gratitude, to enquire by what unguess'd at means she came to be so far reduc'd to stand in need of a Defender? *Bellcour* being equally impatient to know the Beginning, as her Father was to be satisfied of the End, joined his Entreaties with the Commands of the other; and to satisfy both, she began in this manner:

You know, Sir! *said she, addressing herself to her Father*, that when the Ship cast Anchor, you being oblig'd to stay a little time to take care of something you had on board, which you were unwilling to commit to any other Person, I was sent on shore before you, under the Conduct of *Clavio*; who instead of carrying me where you directed him, which I remember was

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to this Inn, where now we are, (thanks to all-gracious Heaven, and my kind Protector, the generous Instrument of its benignant Care of my Unworthiness) bore me to a Wood, whose shady Horrors and unfrequented Wilds, soon as I entred it, struck a dread upon my Soul, and presently did I find the Effect of my foreboding Thoughts. We had not travell'd above twenty Furlongs before happening to cast my Eyes upon him, I saw his Countenance so alter'd, he scarce was to be known; a death-like Paleness sat upon his livid Cheek, while from his flaming Eyes a thousand Furies darted. — I knew not what I fear'd, but yet I trembled with an unspeakable Terror: Alas! it was not long before he let me know I had a dreadful Cause for apprehension; for jumping suddenly from his Horse, he took mine by the Bridle, and obliging me to dismount, Forgive me, Madam, *said he*, that I take this way, in all appearance so rough and uncourtly, to tell you the long-hid Passion of my Soul; I love you, I adore you, and as I know there is too great a disparity in our Fortunes, for me to hope to gain you by such means as Lovers ordinarily make use of, I have laid hold of this Opportunity, which your Father has given me, of telling you, that since I cannot expect to marry you, I must enjoy you; —
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the Possession of your Charms is a Blessing so necessary to my Peace, that I wou'd prefer Death in its most hideous Tortures, to a long Life without you.——Yield therefore with willingness to the Joys of Love, which I swear by those Powers which gave you such transcendant Charms, shall be inviolably kept secret.—— A vast deal more he uttered, to the same horrid Meaning, which is needless to repeat, nor indeed have I the power to do it: Fear, Rage, Disdain, Despair, and Shame at once invaded me, and render'd me incapable of hearing, or at least remembering half of what he said; all that I know, is, my resistance being too weak to oppose his Strength, I was oblig'd to have recourse to Entreaties; I wept, I begg'd, I kneel'd, nay even promis'd I wou'd conceal his base Attempt from you; and if he wou'd desist, hear him urge his Suit with patience: but sooner might my weak Breath have stop'd the warring Winds, or stop'd the flying Thunder in its Course, than move the Soul of this obdurate Villain: and had not this Gentleman appear'd as my Guardian-Angel in Distress to save me, I had been the most abandoned and wretched Creature that the Sun's Eye e'er saw. Here she stop'd, and *Bellcour* perceiving the recital of this Adventure was

was painful to her, finish'd the History of it, by telling her Father in what manner he had resent'd the injury he was about to do, and his remorseless and impudent Behaviour, even after he found himself defeated. 'Tis needless to repeat the Exclamations in which they both join'd, on the monstrous Passions with which some Men suffer themselves to be agitated : after which, the old Gentleman proceeded to tell *Bellicour* how doubly vile, from what it wou'd have been in any other Man, this attempt was in *Clavio* ; for that he being the Son of a Person reduced to great misfortunes, and wholly friendless in the World, his Charity had taken him into the House, made him his Clerk, allowed him a handsome Salary for that Service, and conferr'd many other Marks of favour on him. As they were in this Discourse, a Waiter came in, and inform'd the Company that there was a Gentleman enquired for one *Boanarus*, a Merchant lately arrived from *Jamaica* : Oh 'tis my dear *Maraphill*, said he, I sent to advertise him of my coming, being told here, that he was in these Parts. In speaking these Words, he ran out to meet him, leaving *Bellcour* in a Consternation, which cannot be well express'd—to reflect that

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in attempting to fly his Father's House, he had met with an Adventure which oblig'd him to return on his own accord; and that the very Woman whom to avoid, he wou'd have ventur'd all things, was the Person who had induc'd him to come back, seem'd to him so strange a mystery of Fate, as took up all his Thoughts. *Mirtamene*, who imagin'd his Silence, and the deep Study she beheld him in, proceeded only from his surprize of meeting her in so unexpected a manner, and perhaps too at finding her so much more agreeable than he had figur'd her out in his mind; smiling, said to him, You see now the Reason why I did not on your first demand acquaint you who I was: by the few Words you utter'd, and the Description I had heard of you from those who have seen you, and have since been in *Jamaica*, I guess'd that you were *Bellcour*, and had a Curiosity to see how you wou'd behave to me, before you knew me to be the Daughter of *Boanarus*, and your intended Bride. Ah Madam! *reply'd he*, you cannot be so much a stranger to your unequall'd Charms, as to imagine they needed the Assistance of your Name to subdue any Heart who was not altogether unsusceptible of Beauty.——She was about to make
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make some obliging Answer to these Words, when the two Fathers came into the Room: 'Tis hard to say, whether the Joy or Amazement of *Maraphill*, at the sight of his Son, in a Place where he so little hoped to find him, was the most predominant; or if it either exceeded that of *Boanarus*, when he found that lovely and accomplished Gentleman, whom he had been infinitely taken with before he knew him, to be *Bellcour*, was the Person to whom he had promis'd his darling Daughter. Some time was past in mutual Gratuations; after which, *Maraphill*, who was impatient to know how all this came about, was inform'd by his Son of the Truth of every thing, excepting only that he had a Design of leaving *Plymouth*, excusing himself for going into the Wood, by saying, that being too eager in the pursuit of his Game, he had out-rode his Company, and missing his way, lost hearing of the Horns.

Boanarus and his Followers having refreshed themselves after the Fatigue of their Voyage, *Maraphill* wou'd needs have them to his House, telling his old Friend, he now thought himself the happiest of Mankind; that he thought it best to have the Marriage of the young

People celebrated in the Country, and that after that they would go all together to *London*. The Father of *Mirtamene* was of the same opinion, and no one at that time offered any thing in opposition to it.

Nothing now but Feasting and Mirth was to be seen in the Family of *Maraphill*; he was overjoy'd to find *Mirtamene* such as he thought it impossible his Son cou'd dislike, and that in his addreses to her, he rather appear'd as a passionate Lover, than as a Person who was to marry her on Compulsion. *Boanarus*, charm'd with the Behaviour and Perfections of his intended Son-in-Law, bless'd the happy Moment in which he made that choice. But all the Rapture that either of these was capable of knowing, was short to that which fill'd the Soul of *Mirtamene*, the moment she ow'd her deliverance to *Bellcour*; she fancy'd she saw something so graceful in his Air, that she in secret wish'd the Man design'd to be her Husband might have some resemblance of this lovely Stranger: and no sooner found he was indeed the Person, than she felt a Pleasure, which no Words can utter. In fine, never was a Passion more sincere and ardent, than that she was inspir'd with

with in his favour, nor never did Woman think herself more blest than she, in being the desired Bride of so seemingly meritorious a Husband. *Bellcour* was the only Person who laboured under any Inquietudes, and his were of a nature perhaps superior to what any Man on Earth but himself ever knew.—All that Resolution, which the tenderness he had borne *Alathia* had inspir'd him with, vanish'd at the sight of *Mirtamene*; and as before he was only anxious to evade marrying her, without totally disobliging his Father, his horrors now sprung from the Reflection, that he was not in a condition to become her Husband.—How did he now repent tying that irrevocable Knot! —how regret the sudden disposing himself! —a thousand times he curs'd his Passion for *Alathia*, his Unbelief that there was a Woman in the World so infinitely more worthy, as now to his chang'd Nature *Mirtamene* seem'd; —almost distracted to find how much he lov'd, how much he was belov'd, yet was incapable of enjoying the Fruits of such a mutual Passion—How blest beyond the reach of Words, (said he to himself) might I have been, in added Wealth, paternal Love, and the possession of a Creature form'd to bestow
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immortal Happiness; and how accurs'd has my blind Folly, my rash ungovern'd Disobedience made me! — Sometimes he was determin'd to pursue his first intentions of departing from his Father's, which he now might easily have done, being much less observ'd than he had been, and leaving a Letter behind him, which should inform his Father of the Truth of all; but he no sooner form'd this resolution, than the Idea of *Mirtamene*, all charming, all ravishing to Imagination, rose and put a stop to the Dictates of his Virtue. — At others, he swore to himself he would reveal to *Mirtamene* herself the History of his misfortune; but Love, Shame, and the Pity for those griefs which he thought such a recital would involve her in, took from him the power: Nor cou'd he, with all that strength of Reason he was master of, decide the Contest between Love and Honour.

In the mean time, he saw every thing preparing for his Nuptials, and at last in an entire readiness, yet was he still irresolute: — Never was Anguish more insupportable, more terrible, than that he endured the Night before the appointed Day; but still did his ill Genius, and the guilty Passion he had for *Mirtamene*,

tamene, render it impossible for him, either by flying to escape the Crime he was so near acting, or by declaring to any one the Truth, seek Comfort from Advice or Precept: — Sleep had the whole Night been a Stranger to his Eyes, yet was he in Bed, when his Father came into the Room; who reproaching him in a jocular way, for the little Sense he had of his approaching Happiness, he only answer'd in a fullen manner, that he was indispos'd, and wish'd the Marriage had not been so suddenly appointed. These Words, and the Air with which they were pronounc'd, soon chang'd the gay Humour *Maraphill* had been in, into one wholly the reverse: he flew immediately into his former Passions, and renewed his Curses on his Son, if he did not instantly rise, and prepare himself to obey his Will. *Bellcour*, to whom no shock cou'd be greater than that of his displeasure, utter'd in terms so bitter, terrify'd with the Thoughts of incurring it for ever, attended by Want, Shame, Censure and all the Ills of Poverty, and at the same time fir'd with the Beauties of *Mirtamene* ever present to his Mind, assur'd him of Compliance to his Command: but he had not left the Room two Minutes,

Minutes, before the Wrong he was about to do *Alathia*, awak'd Conscience with so severe a Check, that he was *then* more resolute than ever, rather to die than be guilty of so detestable a Crime. With these Thoughts he dress'd himself, designing no other than when he came into the Room where the Company expected him, to relate the whole Story of his Marriage with *Alathia* before them all. — It is better for me, (sigh'd he out) to endure all that the Fury of an offended Father can inflict upon me, than to become unworthy of the name of Man, by falsifying my Vows to one that loves me. Settled in all appearance in this Disposition, he left his Chamber; but the first Person he met, being *Mirtamene*, the sight of her in a moment chas'd from his Soul all the Ideas which Honour, Virtue, and the remembrance of *Alathia* had created there; — he flew to her, embrac'd her, and in that moment of Delight despis'd all other Considerations: He led her to her Father and his, and express'd himself in terms so full of Transport at the Happiness they had decreed for him, that neither of them had any reason to suspect but that he thought himself compleatly blest. In fine, the fears of
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gary, the Desire he had to possess *Mirtamene*, together with the Reflection that tho' he was marry'd to the other, it had been done with so much privacy, that no Person but herself had the power of declaring, and that she neither knew the Name nor Place of Abode of the Clergyman who had joined their Hands, and that since he had a Release from her own Hand from all former Ties and Obligations; made him no longer hesitate to satisfy at once his Father's Will, and the wild Cravings of his own Desires: They were married in a few hours after he had finished this Debate within himself, in the presence of as many Witnesses as the Retirement they were in cou'd produce. To the enjoyment of his criminal Transport, let us leave him for a while, and return to poor *Alathia*.

That tender and obliging Wife delayed not making all imaginable speed to Town; but how strangely was she surprized, when at her return she heard that *Maraphill* with all his Family were retir'd to *Plymouth*. But so much did she depend on the Love and Honour of *Bellcour*, that she guess'd the Thing as really it was, and made herself easy in the assurance that he wou'd on the first

opportunity return. The first of her uneasiness was, that she received no Letter from him, thinking if he had retain'd those Ardors he formerly profess'd for her, industrious Love wou'd have form'd some contrivance to attest its Truth. At length the Report of his being married reached her Ears; the first Information she rejected as altogether fabulous, but hearing it confirm'd by all the Mouths which mentioned him, she began to tremble lest he had indeed been prevailed on through Interest or a new Inclination to commit that Crime: yet still unwilling to believe him base, and unable to endure uncertainty in an Affair of so much consequence, she resolved to know the Truth; and as nothing but ocular Demonstration could convince her it was so, she procur'd herself a Suit of Men's Clothes, and in all things equipt like a Youth of fashion, went in the Stage-Coach to *Plymouth*; having pretended to her Father, that she had a Desire to return to the Place she came from in the Country, and chang'd her Habit at the House of a Friend to whom her overpowering Anxieties had oblig'd her to reveal the Secret of her Marriage.

Being arriv'd at *Plymouth*, she easily inform'd herself where was the House of
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Maraphill; and going there, and enquiring with an aking Heart if *Bellcour* was at home, was told by the Servants that he was, and immediately desir'd to walk into the Parlour, where she waited not long before her perfidious Husband appear'd. *Guilt*, tho' not *Love*, brought her so frequently to his mind, that in spite of her disguise he knew her the moment he set his foot into the Room—and before she could speak to him, Oh *Alathia!* cry'd he, why have you done this?—I know I have been guilty of a Crime, and am sufficiently punish'd for it in unceasing Racks of Thought;—but little did I think you wou'd have join'd with my Tormentors to distract me: I am guilty, I am wretched, what more would your Revenge require?—in pity therefore leave me, nor by bringing to my sight one I have so greatly wrong'd, increase Calamities which are already too great to be supported. All that one can figure out in Imagination would come far short of that shock which struck the Soul of the amazed *Alathia* at this plain Confession of his Crime; and the Gentleness of her Nature, having never before been ruffled in so terrible a manner, must of consequence have depriv'd her of the power of resenting, or convert

to a Rage equal to the injuries which excited it : what was the Effect of hers, her Actions, not Words declar'd. You shall no more be persecuted with *Alathia*, cry'd she, (drawing her Sword, and plunging it hastily into her Breast;) thus I deliver you from the upbraidings of an injur'd, but too tenderly loving Wife. With so much Violence she struck the Blow, that he presently in attempting to draw the fatal Weapon forth, perceiv'd it cou'd not be done without the Life-Blood issuing with it. The Cry he sent forth, brought *Mirtamene*, who was no farther than the next Room, immediately into this. What was now the Condition of *Bellcour*, let any one, if it be possible for them to do so, conceive. He saw the Woman whom he had once lov'd, with an extremity of ardor breathing her last, through his Ingratitude and Perjury :—those Eyes which had so often charm'd him, swimming in floods of Tears, more for his Guilt than the sad Consequence it had produc'd on herself, on the one side ; and on the other, the deceived *Mirtamene* with, even in ignorance, Reproaches in her Eyes, for what was else the innocent Wonder she express'd at the sad Tragedy before her ; was something too terrible to be withstood : he could not live
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and bear it, but snatching suddenly his Sword, which happened to lie on a Table in that Room, put a period to his Life by the same way his injur'd Wife had done. The Shrieks of *Mirtamene* brought *Maraphill*, *Boanarus*, and others who happened to be there that day, to be Witnesses of this dreadful spectacle. What *Bellcour* could not in his Life-time reveal, in the pangs of Death he declared before them all; and having ask'd forgiveness of *Mirtamene*, he turn'd to the dead Body of *Alathia*; Now, now my dear wrong'd Wife, I return for ever to thy Arms; and then expir'd. *Mirtamene* swooned away, and *Boanarus* and *Maraphill*, before half stupified with what they saw and heard, seem'd a while to forget the Dead in the Cares of the Living. Soon did their endeavours bring her to herself, but 'twas long before she could listen to any Arguments of Consolation; and *Maraphill*, oppress'd with grief for the death of his Son, resign'd his Life in a short space after; nor did *Boanarus* long survive him. *Mirtamene*, warn'd by the example of *Bellcour*, that Interest, Absence, or a new Passion, can make the most seeming constant Lover false, took a Resolution ever to condemn and hate

hate that betraying Sex to which she
 owed her Misfortune, and the Sight of
 such a Disaster as she had beheld in
Alatbia.

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